

# ISLAMISM IN ACEH: GENEALOGY, SHARI'ATIZATION, AND POLITICS

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper argues Islamism in Aceh Province, Indonesia, has a long history within the social structure of the Acehnese people. Genealogically, there are two factors to view Islamism here, namely the relationship between Islam and politics in the past, and the people's cultural and social construction, which has a strong Islamic base. Therefore, the collective memory about the relationship between Islam and politics, as well as the construction, then has implications in the lives of the Acehnese people in closely viewing those from various aspects. This study applies a qualitative method in which the data were collected through observation, interview, and documentation. The findings indicate that Islamism in Aceh is not a form of compensation from the Government of Indonesia to quell the conflict, but rather the form of aspirations that come from below on the long-standing awareness in the cultural and social structure of the locals regarding the relationship between religion and the state. In addition, unlike similar studies involving the notion of Pan-Islamism, the result shows that Islamism is more likely as the demands to retrieve political recognition.*

**Keywords:** Islamism; Aceh; Genealogy; Shari'atization

## INTRODUCTION

For over two decades, the formalization of Islamic law (Islamism) in Aceh has been well-strengthened. Various forms of legislation issued have contributed to the strengthening of the Islamism construction in the province, for instance, the ratification of the *Jinayat* Canon (criminal code) (Tempo.co 2014) and the Canon on the sharia financial institutions (Tempo.co 2019). The Islamism construction in Aceh reflects the single identity that positions Islam as a vital part of the life of Acehnese people as citizens. The identity began to be structured since the national revolution (Hasjmy 1984; Ibrahimy 1982; Sulaiman 1997). Initially, the ideal did not run as

expected, which triggered the Darul Islam Daud Beureuh uprising (Apipudin 2016; A Munhanif 2016; Sjamsuddin 1990). It succeeded in offering the province the authority to implement Islamic formalism under the Sukarno's Guided Democracy regime, but, as written by Nashir (2013), the New Order regime later hampered the expectation. However, at the end of the 20th century, the New Order regime collapsed so that the open political space was used by the province to formalize the Sharia law (Abubakar 2005; Feener 2012).

So far, studies of Islamism in Aceh tend to discover two issues. First, the studies confirm that the implementation of Sharia law is the

compensation from the Government of Indonesia to defuse the conflict in the province (Aspinall 2009; Salim 2018). The compensation relates to the two armed rebellions that have taken place in Aceh, namely Darul Islam (Djik 1981; Ali Munhanif 2016) and the Free Aceh Movement (Ichwan 2011; Kingsbury 2007; Schulze 2004). Second, studies of Islamism in Aceh agree that the formalization is the plan of the Muslim modernists in the province (Aspinall 2007; Feener 2016). The group became dominant in the early 20th century due to the ability to respond to the modernity growing in Muslim countries through modern education networks (Srimulyani 2013). This modern Muslim movement plans to make Islam a comprehensive view of human life (Burhani 2013; Madinier 2015; Njoto-Feillard 2014; Noer 1980). The two trends above demonstrate that the studies on Islamism in Aceh ignore the existence of the collective awareness rooted in Aceh's cultural and social system regarding the genealogical relationship between Islam and politics.

The purpose of this paper is to complement the shortcomings of previous studies, which have less attention to the diversity of the dimensional issues related to the genealogy of Islamism in Aceh. In particular, this paper shows that the Islamism construction in Aceh is a collective identity that has been built for a long time. In line with that, three questions appear based on the aforementioned background – *first*, what is the form of Islamism that developed in Aceh?, *secondly* What factors are the basis for the Islamism development in Aceh?, and *thirdly*, how the Islamism's existence has implications for the religious pattern of the Acehnese people? The answer to the questions may suggest the understanding of the rationale used as the basis for tracing the genealogy of Islamism in Aceh.

After the Government of Indonesia issued Law No. 44 of 1999 concerning the Privileges

of Aceh Province, the political and religious elites in the province responded immediately by drafting canons, which relate to public morals, orientation religion and Islamic symbols. This action underlines that Islamism in Aceh has a long history. Genealogically, there are two factors to view Islamism here, namely the relationship between Islam and politics in the past, and the people's cultural and social construction, which has a strong Islamic base. Therefore, the collective memory of the relationship and construction offers implications in the lives of the Acehnese people in closely viewing those from various aspects that may share the insights of Islamism studies.

## **Literature Review**

### **The Concept of Islamism**

In the beginning, Islam was a religion that was revealed as a personal vocation, not as a belief that grew into a world ideology. Ultimately, it became a counterpoint to the concept of capitalism or communism (Dalacoura 2019). However, afterward, Islam became a political idea called Islamism, especially when the Muslim world met with the Western world. Hence, the idea of Sharia became the core of Islamic teachings and became a political ideology. The term Islamism is then defined as a view that wants to make the application of sharia law, the desire to establish an Islamic state, political preferences for Islamic parties in elections, the participation of scholars in politics, and ideas about the religiosity of politicians (Gorman 2017).

Islamism is not known in the old Islamic tradition, which is more potent on moral guidelines (El Fadl 2015), or as Tibi (2015) says, the Islamism movement is ahistorical in viewing Islam and the characteristics of Muslim society. However, the law that grew in society deliberately changed when entering the 19<sup>th</sup>

century. Haq (2017) describes the Western colonial practice of codifying laws that were finally decided by the previous sharia tradition. In fact, for 13 centuries, the sharia that grew in Muslim society was a flexible set of norms under the clergy's authority. This explains why in its long history in the history of Islamic law, legal pluralism has grown through the four most well-known schools of thought in the tradition of Islamic jurisprudence (Naim 2018).

As a political idea, Islamism was developed by early figures such as Mawdudi, Yassin, or Islamic groups from Iran. Islamist is a technical term for people who tend to see Islam as a political ideology (Hamid 2016) in which Islamic ideas must become an authentic part of state life (Tibi 2013). This idea presupposes neglect of local culture and the notion that Islamic beings must transcend national boundaries (Bayat 2005). Tibi and Bayat's criticism above indeed targets the pattern of the Islamist movement as practiced by ISIS, in which institution builds branding about the legitimacy of their organization as part of Islam through three justifications: carrying out prophetic historical construction, symbolism that is unique to Islam, and building ideological attachment (Bandopadhyaya 2019). In addition, ISIS and Al Qaida use narratives of political failure from state management in developing their organizations (Lister 2016). In the context of the modern world, Islamism is said to have grown because of the response to the dominance of the western world against the Islamic world (Quamar, 2017). In India, the Muslims faced each other with the British in a colonial state, so mutual suspicion was built (Ahmad, 2010; Aslam, 2016). Another factor is colonialism's oppressive economic factor policies that give rise to hatred of the West (Ali, 2016).

The entry of discussion about the idea of political Islam or Islamism into the public sphere can be perceived as the response to secular

ideas that firstly dominate the Muslim world. To illustrate, the case of ISIS highlights the idea of political Islam, which is integrated as an ideology to fight the dominance of secular ideas publicly (H. M. 2018). Something similar also happens in Algeria, when political modernization is defined as the separation of religion from the political space, which obtains a response from political Islam (Sebastian 2015). However, Islamism can also be seen as an idea that comes internally, which emerges from the religious doctrine and is a form of response to the secular world (Mietzner, Muhtadi, and Halida 2018). In addition, it also continues to take different forms according to the empirical context encountered. For example, the imagination of Jemaah Islamiyah (Islamic Congregation), which also pursues the initial obsession of the Islamist groups in Indonesia to establish an Islamic state of Indonesia (Carnegie 2015). Too, the idea of the Islamic state takes a local locus with jihad activities in areas outside Java. If it is associated with the jihad movement in the two Indonesian regions – Ambon and Poso, Schulze (2019) sees this as a form of identity hardening, resistance to the violence of the New Order regime and struggles over local and political resources.

Meanwhile, other studies are placing Islamism as a phenomenon of the emergence of Islamic radicalism. Genealogically speaking, Bruinessen (2002) views of radicalism in Indonesia is rooted in two Masyumi organizations – Darul Islam and a transnational Islamic network. On the contrary, Buehler (2013) argues that the radical groups grown after the New Order are related to the presence of a decentralized system in Indonesian governance. The increasingly appeared ideas of Islamism in the political space through the ratification of Sharia Regional Regulations are also initiated by the political elites of secular parties. In addition, the development of the Islamism discourse also

appears in the form of the local regulations in Indonesia (Muammar, Drajat, and Katimin 2019; Nurlinah, Darwin, and Haryanto 2018).

Islamism grows from the phenomenon of the Salafist group, a religious movement inspired by Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab. The Salafists' movement has strict religious characteristics and makes distinctions with people who are considered not to reflect Islamic attitudes or who are not Salafists (Chaplin 2018a). Moreover, Chaplin (2018b) observes the Salafists' movement growing in urban areas that construct its religious knowledge by establishing radio stations, providing online religious-services-based social media and forming communities that campaign for their Islamic face. Salafism itself does not work by itself, even though its main idea is to purify religion with literalist interpretations, yet in certain areas, encounters – which are shaped by social practices and structures – with local interpretations based on their community (Østebø 2015; Reese 2012). Holbrook (2016) also notices the same thing in Ayman al-Zawahiri, an important figure in al-Qaeda, who has the idea that the Sharia law reform will always produce legal hybrids through the encounter between Islamic and non-Islamic legal traditions.

### **Islamism in Aceh**

The implementation of Islamism in Aceh can be viewed with similar demands similar to the Moro Philippines experiences, namely as a form of affirmation of identity from the bottom level, although efforts of the government to bring a Sharia plan as a political plan frequently appear (Salim 2004). Regarding the formation of such an identity, Srimulyani (2013) believes that it appears from the long history of the birth of the modern Islamic schools in Aceh, where its initial emergence is a response to modernity. However, after the regional autonomy and Sharia law formalism, the schools face a shift in identity

with the absorption of the domestic environment and shift away from the national plan. This evolutionary form of citizenship discourse has shifted from the construction of a national identity to a local one, as suggested by Ichwan, Salim, & Srimulyani (2020). In Aceh, the growing identity depends on religion, which also meets religious ethnonationalism sentiments. This has resulted in the birth of distinctive civic identity, namely the existence of citizens who have the right to be hosts, then some are treated as guests because of these differences in beliefs.

The idea of Islamism in Aceh receives support from the communities through the involvement of the *dayah ulama* (Islamic scholars teaching at Islamic schools in Aceh) who are the members of *Himpunan Ulama Dayah Aceh* (the Association of Dayah Ulama in Aceh) (Firdaus, Amiruddin, and Drajat 2017). Their role is significant due to their central position within the Acehnese people (Alfian 1975; Muntasir 2018). There is a narrative that the ulama in Aceh has an important role because of their involvement in the past conflict, the tsunami and the peace process (Barter 2011; Widiyanti 2006). However, Islamism in Aceh also elicits criticism on two issues – women and non-Muslims. The issue of women in constructing Sharia law becomes the problem, particularly when they must do negotiations regarding awrah (Vignato 2014), even though the enforcement of the law does not fully engage them. In addition, the implementation of Sharia law in Aceh has affected the position of non-Muslim women socially, politically and economically (Ansor, Arrauf, and Amri 2016). In the context of the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims, the condition also raises a new issue on Aceh's Islamic identity and creates a demarcation line between them, which leads to a situation that sentiments to the non-Muslims (Makin 2016).



## Conceptual Framework

Genealogy is defined as a study to explore a side where the focus is more on the methodology, rather than the discipline, particularly in its subsequent development (Koopman 2013). The definition states that the idea of genealogy originally developed Nietzsche to see the building of morality (Prescott-Couch 2015a). Nietzsche's view also places the moral genealogically in history (Nietzsche 1997; Prescott-Couch 2015b). The genealogical approach that relies on a historical approach (Dittmer 2021) has been criticized by proposing a more explicit geographic methodology (Hodder, Heffernan, and Legg 2021; Max Turnbull 2021). Studies of genealogy are implemented on many occasions to trace areas of relevance to practical interests, like the issues of resistance. This is seen in the latest Islamic political discourse when a genealogical perspective is also used to measure the legitimacy of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's leadership in ISIS (Alkaff 2014). Furthermore, in the relationship between east and west, as reviewed by Azeez (2015), who perceives that genealogically the control of the West against the East has led to the occurrence of resistance. In the context of the terrorist act, France in 2015, for instance, Filiu (2016) views it as part of a network of anti-American terror groups in Iraq, which is then genealogically analyzed as a generational transmission grew before the presence of ISIS with activists involved in the movements, which were inspired by the terror act.

A genealogical perspective is also used to explore issues of ownership and identity. This is shown by indigenous peoples in their conflict with the state when addressing the case of environmental land ownership (Menon and Karthik 2019). In the study of Méndez (2021), a similar resistance movement occurred in Tarapacá, Chile, when technological modernization threatened indigenous ownership

of water. The study confirms that genealogical tracing, from the 19th to 20th centuries, found that residents grew up with their knowledge of the water, something scientists would refute by offering a modern discourse on water ownership. The genealogical approach is also taken by the native Hawaiian when defining their original identity by tracing the kinship system when dealing face-to-face with the new identity of American political and cultural imperialism (Warren 2015). In addition, in an urban study in Hargeisha, Somalia, a genealogical perspective is deployed to discover how the kinship system influences governmental negotiations (Tahir 2021).

The discipline over a body is also a focal study of genealogy. Foucault (2019) traces the issue discussed in the genealogy discourse. He sees this body discipline as a form of the panopticon. In China, a body discipline is in the context of knowledge production and competition with the United States as viewed by Chenga & Liu (2021). In a different context, Australia as an example, in its colonial history, the panopticon is done using administrative detention to regulate feelings of being threatened with identity, integrity, and security (Nethrey 2021). Meanwhile, in Palestine, the practice of imprisoning bodies is carried out with the practice of *urbicide* through the destruction of urban spatial plans, sieges and the rejection of rehabilitation (Chiodelli 2021). A similar condition also occurs in Malaysia and Pakistan, where the discipline through the creation of public order is shaped by British dominance due to the residue from the experiences of colonialism (Hussin 2019).

## RESEARCH METHOD

Genealogy of Islamism is selected as the subject of this paper for three considerations. First, the issue of the genealogy of Islamism

in Aceh is an essential topic that has not earned much attention in previous studies. Next, the topic elaborates the existence of a causal relationship that requires an in-depth understanding. Besides, it arises for reasons that need to be disclosed. Third, genealogy Islamic becomes the basis for the social structure and Islamic culture that has a long history in Aceh. Understanding this indeed demands mapping to formulate actions. The above considerations are expected to provide a thorough reading and insights for problem-solving, specifically in terms of genealogy Islamism.

This qualitative study relies on primary and secondary data. The primary data were retrieved from the field studies to observe directly and from mapping research aspects. Data needed consisted of data on the form, factors and implications of the Islamism studies in Aceh. The form data concerns how the understanding of Islamism developed in Aceh over a long period. The tracing of each period would enlighten the ideas of Islamism, which always evolved, either because of its response to the political situation or its discourse development. Next, factors that became the basis for the development of Aceh's Islamism were mapped in terms of ideology, history, identity, and armed conflict. With the diversity of these factors, Islamism in Aceh can be understood from various perspectives. Data regarding the implications of the controversy were also mapped, especially on how Islamism affects people in their daily lives.

This study involved three parties in data collection. They were (a) informants consisted of university intellectuals, politicians and bureaucrats, who are responsible for the Islamism affairs in Aceh; (b) the middle class consisted of civil societies and Islamic organizations; and (c) the group of ulama having affiliations in madrasas and *dayah*. The three parties were involved to examine how social groups have significance in

giving meaning to the genealogy of Islamism in Aceh. The research process lasted two months, starting with a desk review, field observations and interviews. Before the field research was conducted, various secondary materials, including online news, were collected to map the genealogy of Islamism in the form of text. Furthermore, the observation was conducted in some meeting rooms, where the hybrid identity of the parties could be observed directly. The interviews were done with the three aforementioned informants for mapping purposes. Then, the data analysis was carried out in two stages. First, it was done before the research work was carried out; second, it was started when the data collection was initiated and after the data accumulation for a certain duration.

State the data collecting method, data analysis, type of the research, time and place of the research (if the article based on the field research), mention the hypothesis if your article has it (optional).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Forms of Islamism in Aceh**

In the view of the Acehnese people, Islam is inherent in state practice. One of them is to ensure that the application of Islam is the same as the implementation of Islamic criminal law (Bustamam-Ahmad 2007). The existence of Islamic criminal law is essential in the formalization of Sharia law implementation. This is shown by the efforts to improve the canons relating to the crime, starting from Canon No. 12 of 2002 concerning *khamr* (consuming alcohol drinks), Canon No. 13 concerning *maisir* (gambling), Canon No. 14 concerning *khalwa* (having seclusion), which are then revised to Canon *Jinayat* (Hasni 2020). The existence of such formalism in *Sharia* law is agreed upon by the plurality of Islamic groups in Aceh (Feener 2012; Miller 2004). At the same time,

it is not a monopoly of Islamic modernists, such as Masyumi's experience in Indonesia, who explicitly wishes to make Islam the basis of a country (Madinier 2015). Based on an interview with Irawan Abdullah, a member of the Acehnese parliament, since it was declared two decades ago, the implementation of Sharia law has been increasingly better, starting from the codification of the Canon *Jinayah*, Canon *Baitul Mal* (House of Treasure), Canon on the Principles of *Sharia* Law Implementation, and Canon on *Sharia* Financial Institutions.

Since the beginning, the desire to formalize the Sharia law in Aceh has been started from the period of the independence revolution. This effort can be traced from the unwritten political agreement between Sukarno and Daud Beureueh, where Aceh was granted autonomy to implement the formalism of Sharia law (Ibrahimi 1982). The imagination regarding the formalization of the law is manifested by controlling the public morals, which is the actual old imagination of the Acehnese leadership. When the power of the ulama strengthened in the revolutionary period, the matters of improving public morals were also carried out, including by issuing a regulation for the prohibition of consuming alcohol drinks (Reid 1979; Sjamsuddin 1990; Sulaiman 1997). A journalist coming to Aceh when the aforementioned period, Radjab (1958), noticed that Aceh's public sphere was quite Islamic. Young ladies could not be found on public roads, but the older ones. The dreamy idea ultimately found the dead-end since the newly formed Aceh Province was dissolved, which led to the armed rebellion of *Darul Islam* (Aspinall 2007).

After the rebellion ended, the Government of Indonesia leveled up the status of Aceh to a Special Province (Ganie 2021), which is responded to by Hardi (1983), who believes it is different from the status given to another special province, the Special Region of Yogyakarta.

However, the expectation failed to be realized after the New Order, which was replaced by Guided Democracy. Unfortunately, in 1967, it rejected the proposals for the Regional Regulation on Principles for the Sharia Implementation (Nashir 2013). This aspiration was then able to be implemented after the fall of the New Order regime with the enactment of Law No. 44 of 1999 concerning the privileges of Aceh. However, in its journey, the formal implementation of Sharia law in Aceh formally leads to a single interpretation through the canons issued by the legislature of the province. Several interpretations in the Canon No. 11 of 2002, explicitly mention the definition of Sharia dressing, while confirming the official *aqedah* adopted in Aceh is *Ahlul Sunnah wal Jamaah*. Next, the issuance of Canon No. 11 of 2018 concerning *Sharia* Financial Institutions lists one of the terms to allow the Sharia banking system in carrying the financial transactions.

### **Factors Underlying the Development of Islamism in Aceh**

The strong involvement of the ulama in politics is one of the main factors for the growth of Islamism in Aceh. Initially, the ulama did not involve in the domain. The ulama in the structural reign of the Acehnese Sultanate acted as the advisor for decision-making and religious issues (Azra 2013; Khan 2017; Lombard 1986). However, after the sultanate was cornered when dealing with the colonial political forces, the ulama left their circles to become the main actors in the colonial war (I. Alfian, 1987; Masri, Suprayitno, & Ratna, 2018; Mukhlis & RN, 2021; Rizki, 2020; Siahaan, Hendra, & Midhio, 2021). Their involvement in politics is a warranty that the religious ideas are applicable in the context of statehood (Ali 1994; Ali, Monoarfa, and Effendy 2008; Sjamsuddin 1999). Although their influence had receded in the New Order era, their role is now back solidly through the distribution

of the *dayah* scientific network (Nirzalin 2018). The spread has made the ulama confident to take part in politics, including participating in the Elections for Regional Head (aceh.tribunews.com 2016). In an interview with Teuku Zulkhari, a formulator in *Silaturahmi Akbar Ulama* (Great Gathering of *Ulama*) on November 10-11, 2021, he mentions that the involvement of politics and religion is a response to disappointment in the implementation of Sharia law in various fields that have been practiced by the government, so the involvement of ulama is necessary to ensure the law enforcement successfully.

Another factor contributing to the growth of Islamism is the writing of history in Aceh, which always depicts the close relationship between Islam and politics. In the phase of the Acehnese sultanate, the relationship between Sharia ulama, the Sultan and heroic stories of war heroes was conveyed as the main narrative. Moreover, if it is associated with the context of contemporary Aceh, the religious ideas to win politics are needed due to the defeat against the Dutch in the colonial war. This explains why the memorandum of *Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Aceh* (the Association of Acehnese Ulama) in 1950 asserts that such a group is legitimate to continue the leadership in Aceh to replace the Sultan (Ali et al. 2008). Such narrative is constructed on historiography that always places Aceh, war and ulama as the main actors (Jacub 2018). The link between politics and Islam in Aceh and is packed in the famous *hadith maja* (Acehnese saying), *Adat bak Po teumeureuhom, Hukom bak Syiah Kuala, Qanun bak Putroe Phang, Reusam bak Laksamana* (places worldly power in the hand of the king, while that of the law is the purview of the great imam who interpreted Quran and hadith) (Khalsiah et al. 2018; Nasution and Miswari 2019).

The two factors above, politics and history, also contributed to the two-armed rebellions

that had occurred, *Darul Islam* and the Free Aceh Movement. The rebellion initiated by *Darul Islam* demanded to have autonomy in carrying out *sharia* law. The demand was based on dissatisfaction with the way the Government of Indonesia treated Aceh, so the rebellion took place. Fortunately, the demand was fulfilled by having an autonomous status for Aceh Province, meaning it has special authority. Meanwhile, the rebellion started by the Free Aceh Movement proposed the idea of ethnonationalism, yet it also supported Islamism in peacetime. A political party in Aceh called Partai Aceh has always been the main sponsor to issue canons of Islamism, such as Canon *Jinayat* (Tempo.co 2014) and Canon on *Sharia* Financial Institutions (Aceh.tribunnews.com 2021).

### **The Implications of Islamism on the Acehnese People's Socio-religious Lives**

Islamism in Aceh contributes to the growth of piety on an individual demonstrated in the public sphere. It becomes an old tradition growing in the province (Khan 2013; Kloos 2015). In addition, the attitude is formed by standardizing the Sharia dressing through the Sharia law in the form of canon enactment (Ansor 2014). Based on the authors' observation in the biggest city of Aceh Province, Banda Aceh, the practice of such attitude is shown by the widespread mobilization of the dawn prayer in the congregation by several communities, *Tim Safari Subuh* BBC, for instance. In some mosques, after the dawn prayer, the congregation drinks coffee and opens the Islamic discussions occasionally. This public piety parade shows a new symptom, where Islamism is the driving force to trigger the attitude in someone. Additionally, it is represented by the growing number of recitation communities called themselves *hijra* communities within urban Muslim societies. The communities existing are



Langsa *Mengaji*; *Komunitas Generasi Rabbani* founded by Awalul Zikri, a young *ulama* from Langsa, eastern Aceh; *Majelis Mahabbah Rasulullah*; and *Muslimah Aceh Fillah*.

With the clear presence of Islamism in the public sphere, the *shariatization* of Acehnese customs and cultures is being supported. When the public sphere and morals are regulated by strict rules of Islamism ideas, it means that the Islamic customs and cultures are also being structured. Based on the authors' observation, the *shariatization* of customs and cultures in expressing arts must adapt to Islamic *fiqh*, for instance, the prohibition of dances performed by women and the banning of the interfering between men and women (Jasrilwin 2021). Even in North Aceh Regency, one of the conservative regencies in Aceh, adult women are prohibited from dancing in public, which is based on the decision of the local *ulama* assembly (Tempo.co 2013). The *shariatization* even also targets the celebration of *Pekan Kebudayaan Aceh* (Aceh Cultural Week), which now cannot be separated from the framework of Islamism (infopublik.id 2018; kesbangpol.bandaacehkota.go.id 2018). According to Muhajir al-Fairusy, a lecturer and anthropologist, the *shariatization* of customs and cultures occur as a result of the structured Islamism in Aceh, so the province is uprooted from its cultural-religious traditions.

In the meantime, Islamism in Aceh leads to the growth of intolerance. Setara Institute released in its survey that Banda Aceh is one of the intolerant regions (kumparanNEWS 2018). The rising number of intolerances is portrayed by Mirza Ardi, a public intellectual and social activist, with a phrase from ethnonationalism to *ethnosectrianism*. He argues that ethnicity in Aceh at the same time marks one's Islamic identity. To illustrate, a woman who does not wear a hijab will be claimed as an outsider. The same thing also occurs for those who have *aqeedah* other than

*ahlulsunnah waljamaah* (abbreviated as Aswaja). Regarding this intolerance, Jafar, an activist at Filosufi, emphasizes that Islamism in Aceh opens a large space for the traditional Acehnese Islamic group called *Aswaja*. It becomes a variable for intolerance in the province as seen in the case of the seizure that happened in two well-known mosques in Banda Aceh - Baiturrahman Great Mosque and al-Makmur Mosque. Furthermore, according to Jafar, Islamism in Aceh then opens another large space for the issuance of regulations that focus more based on religion instead of the basis of citizenship. The implication is the regulation will favor the majoritarianism.

Studies discussing the genealogy of Islamism shows that Islamic formalism in Aceh is not a matter of political compensation from the Government of Indonesia to defuse military conflicts or aspiration of the Acehnese modernists, yet, it is a social construction having a long history in the collective memories and cultural structures of the region. The formalism of Sharia law in Aceh is not viewed as a form of relationship between the Government of Indonesia and the local one. As discovered in this study, the genealogy of Islamism in Aceh is formed in three typologies. First, it appears because of the encouragement of social factors through the involvement of *ulama* in politics. Next, in the aspect of historical construction, there is a long-standing connection between Islam and politics in Aceh, so the collective imagination is triggered to run the religion by integrating it with politics. Third, Islamism in Aceh offers the implication of the rise of piety in the public sphere, efforts to do the *shariatization* of customs and cultures and the growth of intolerance due to the singular manifestation and legal pontification.

The genealogy of Islamism in Aceh resulted from the involvement of *ulama* in politics, the historiography of Aceh and the presence of Islamic narrative in two military rebellions in

the twentieth century demonstrates that Islamic formalism in the province cannot be seen from the perspective of populism and the practical interests of national and local governments. Islamism in Aceh should be overlooked as the aspiration from the community and the construction of the region's religious identity. Such understanding will answer the reason why did the Acehnese politicians issue the explanatory regulations through the canons or Regional Regulations after the enactment of Law No. 44 of 1999 and Law No. 18 of 2021. Such a response shows the attachment of the Acehnese people to the ideas of Islamism, compared to other ideas like secular nationalism and ethnonationalism. This aspiration of Islamism is gaining momentum since it has the support of traditional ulama, who have a cultural base.

At least, Islamism in Aceh genealogically presents two significant meanings. First, the expression of Islam in Indonesia is not singular. Regions that have a long history of religious involvement in politics, Aceh for example, provide a different spectrum from those that do not. This historical factor delivers the collective awareness of how diversity is manifested in daily lives through state institutions. Second, this genealogical perspective becomes the critique of perspectives that place the rise of political Islam in post-reform Indonesia as a populist phenomenon. This point of view ignores the sociological fact that political Islam has a long history in the contemporary history of Indonesia.

Sofar, related studies of Islamism emphasize four matters. First, studies of Islamism confirm that the implementation of Sharia law in Aceh is compensation from the Government of Indonesia to resolve the conflict in the province (Aspinall 2009; Salim 2018). The compensation relates to the two-armed rebellions that have taken place in Aceh, namely Darul Islam by Daud Beureueh (Djik 1981; Ali Munhanif 2016) and the Free Aceh

Movement resolved by Hasan Tiro (Ichwan 2011; Kingsbury 2007; Schulze 2004). Second, other studies mention Islamism in Aceh as a plan of Muslim modernists. These modernists grow in the early 20th century through a modern Islamic education network (Srimulyani 2013). According to Noer (1980), they have an agenda to make Islam a comprehensive living system (Burhani, 2013; Hefner, 2016; Njoto-Feillard, 2014).

Third, some studies link Islamism in Aceh with the growth of radical groups after the New Order due to the existence of a decentralized system in the new atmosphere of government in Indonesia (Buehler 2013). Fourth, other studies emphasize the Salafist roles in bringing the issue of Islamism onto the surface (Chaplin, 2018a; 2018b; Østebø, 2015; Reese, 2012; Holbrook, 2016). This study differs from the four tendencies above, where it explores Islamism in Aceh as genealogically constructed on three factors. First, the historical construction positions the close relationship between politics and religion that has lasted for a long time. Next, there are social and cultural Islamic structures within the Acehnese people, which become the backbone of the formalization of the Sharia law itself. Last, Islamism in Aceh more likely turns into a demand for political recognition than to be connected with the plan of Pan-Islamism or the global Islamic Caliphate.

## CONCLUSION

It turns out that the formalism of Sharia law of Islamism in Aceh is not compensation from the Government of Indonesia to resolve the armed conflict. Although the argument always appears as a solution when the discussion of resolving the conflict takes place. Also, Islamism is not merely the plans of Muslims, particularly the modernist ones, without considering other aspirations from various community groups. This paper proves

the opposite of the two trends above. Islamism in Aceh, which is constructed from the long history of religious and political relationships in Aceh; the deep involvement of ulama in politics, predominantly since the independence era; and the existence of Islamic narrative in the two-armed rebellions, shows the aspiration regarding the formalization of Sharia law, which is derived from the Acehnese people, which is then interpreted as an identity.

Conceptually, the use of the genealogy of Islamism to look through the case in Aceh reveals the difference in the same-topic-discussion, the absence of the Pan-Islamism plan. The case of Islamism in Aceh shows more on regional sentiments and the strengthening of identity politics in the relationship between the national and local governments after the fall of the Suharto regime. In contrast to similar studies, which suspect the revolution or radical social changes as a doorway for implementing the formalization of Sharia law, Islamism in Aceh takes the democracy space as a medium to make Islamic *fiqh* discourse a positive law. The existence of democratic variables in constructing Islamism in Aceh will open up opportunities for the presence of Sharia democratization as long as the public sphere in the province can grow deliberatively.

Nonetheless, this study is limited to an analysis of political history and an analysis of the two aforementioned armed rebellions. In addition, it selected informants whose spectrum was limited, so they were unable to elaborate a broader meaning. Likewise, this study has a weakness in the selection of partial analysis units, both in terms of actors, issues and regions. In line with that, this study suggests the need for further research by focusing on the representation of informants from various backgrounds, which may send phenomena of Islamism in Aceh. Besides, it is necessary to pay attention to the diversity of regions in Aceh to capture a more comprehensive

Islamism aspiration. In this way, a complete and more in-depth portrait of the genealogy of Islamism in Aceh is more inclusive.

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